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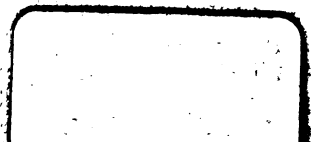
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A VIEW IN BLACKSTONE PARK, P. 42.

The Artographic Co., Central Falls, R. I.

PARKS AND TREE-LINED AVENUES.

Read October 7th. 1891,

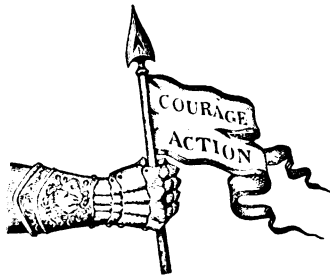
—AT—

The Meeting of the Advance Club,
Providence, R. I.

BY

AUGUSTINE JONES, LL. B.,

President of the Public Parks Association of Providence.



PROVIDENCE:
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No. 7.

PARKS AND TREE-LINED
AVENUES.

READ OCTOBER 7, 1891, AT THE MEETING OF THE ADVANCE CLUB
OF PROVIDENCE, R. I., BY

AUGUSTINE JONES, L.L.B.,

PRESIDENT OF THE PUBLIC PARKS ASSOCIATION OF PROVIDENCE.

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PARKS AND TREE-LINED AVENUES.

BY AUGUSTINE JONES, LL.B.

Lord Beacon says that "God Almighty first planted a garden." A statement which will not be doubted in the face of the record.

The description of Eden is not so extensive, however, as to serve in planting modern parks.

Our parks are extensive tracts of land dedicated to public use, laid out to be pleasant to the eye and to afford recreation in the open air. It is not correct to denominate a small square a park.

The parks of Europe were once the pleasure grounds of kings or of the nobility. And it is an astounding fact, that excepting the game of Baccarat, the zenith of pleasure is attained by the aristocracy of England, only by hunting with dogs, inoffensive animals, in the most magnificent forests in the world.

It certainly was a memorable May day when Charles the First opened Hyde Park, containing three hundred and ninety acres, to the citizens of London.

The old manorial parks were sometimes divided into two parts, one private and highly cultivated near the house, the other remote, uncultivated, open to tenants or certain public uses. As the ancient castles were divided, one portion for the palace, and abode of royalty, another for soldiers and common people.

Hyde Park dates from Henry VIII. It belonged to the old manor of Hyde, and was the property of Westminster Abbey.

This present period is remarkable for the concentration of people in cities. The incentive for this migration from the country is not certain. But doubtless is due in part to the recent facilities for rapid transit, bringing the most remote inhabitants to a knowledge of the advantages of city life. And also to the fact that the progress in the arts and sciences have produced in recent years very many benefits to citizens in common which were previously unknown.

And it is possible that the greed of gain finds greater scope and opportunity where capital abounds and the exchanges of the world are made.

The city certainly holds greater opportunities for luxurious living. Life is more intense, faster. The strong man eager for prosperity and achievement will not hibernate in the lifeless solitude of the country.

The fact is however, vastly more to us at present, than the cause. Modern life receives for its daily use the productions of every zone.

And in the same profusion the population gathered in the city from the country brings the grass, trees, flowers, brooks, cascades, and sets them in the park. And thus the health giving scenery, the beauty, the refreshment of the country follows the migration to the city.

The city park with us is said to date from the writings of A. J. Downing in 1850, and its history only covers forty years.

Nature has been loved and interpreted in recent years far beyond the attainment of any other period. Every



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side of her vast domain has been subjected to the most severe and critical analysis with little regard to former theories. The results have been marvelous. Departments of science have been created and the useful arts have been evolved with astonishing rapidity, and unprecedented accomplishment.

And while the fundamental principles and the internal constitution of things has been under examination and review, the external appearance and effects have not been overlooked.

It is confidently affirmed that the idea of the picturesque for example is modern, and we know that landscape painting is of recent years. Literature holds thought and experience as the strata of the earth retain past forms of life, and expresses with the advancing eras a broader and deeper sympathy with, and more genuine love of nature.

The Reformation gave a new impulse, created a new epoch in the literature of Nature.

William Wordsworth has infused his marvelous studies of nature into all the prose and poetry of this century which pertains to landscapes.

We only begin to have a growing appreciation of his critical observation and delicate expression of beauty and goodness revealed in light and shade, trees and flowers, meadows, lakes, rivers, mountains, sky and clouds and all the infinite variety and moods of nature.

The cause of change in thought and attention pertaining to this subject is doubtless deeper than literature which only records the advance.

It is a growing sense of the beautiful in nature, springing and evolved from all the progress and culture of the

past. It is civilization with the added new forces of greater leisure and greater means.

The ancients had little or no perception of the picturesque. They felt delight in the coolness of streams, in shade, in the softness of grass, in the color and odor of flowers. Sublime scenery was often a peril and a terror to them. They were wanting in that power which brings the parts of a work to the balance of completeness.

Modern impressionism regards less the details and more the result in perspective. Is there not a kindred thought in the fact that set forms and artificial beds of the ancient and the Italian garden, and other like methods have gone by, and more general and more extensive effects are sought.

These thoughts are intended to lead our minds up to a new era, to our own period, in gardens and parks, and to call our attention to the fact that although we are "the heirs of all the ages in the foremost files of time" so far as parks are concerned, yet that our work is essentially new and capable of unlimited growth and progress.

It is a great work of art to lay out a park securing the beauty and variety which the location and its surroundings allow.

It is natural that the village common, mall, or green should occur to one in speaking of parks, because they were the small substitutes for the great parks in cities, and doubtless helped to educate the people and prepare them for parks, and yet they are not parks.

They have besides their immense value as breathing places and open spaces for the inhabitants about them, great attraction because sometimes they are the unappropriated common lands prior to feudal tenures. They are



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A VIEW FROM THE PROPOSED BLACKSTONE PARK. P. 13.

the remnant of lands which were all held in common. They are therefore silent memorials of Saxon freedom.

Paris is the typical modern city. It has become such at an immense cost. It was an old medieval city, and was transformed by absolute power. The objects were to make it the finest capital and metropolis in the world, to secure its defence and also by opening to light and air benighted portions of the city, to advance and develop its sanitation.

All of these purposes were accomplished by one herculean effort.

The example of Paris is instructive. She had the growth of centuries, but her advance was not all in the right direction. The consequence was that when she attempted to correct her errors the expense of radical improvement was enormous, and time honored buildings, and institutions and trees were swept out of existence.

We may also at last discover, that if *we* had begun well, and continued with a well thought out system, *we* should have saved great sums of money, great contests with citizens whose private rights must be forced for the public good, and what is more, trees, buildings and institutions, which nothing can restore ; moreover, every year adds to the difficulty of change, and the evil may outlast generations.

The loss of trees in the broadening of Greenwich street is an impressive lesson to us. The street was too narrow, and every new building or tree, and every year of growth on the trees called for more desperate courage in the man who dared to advocate the needed change to a proper width.

Cities now furnish highways, water and light for streets,

and most of them also have parks, tree-lined parkways and open air spaces.

This provision is not chiefly for the rich who have cultivated private grounds or may ride in the country. It is for all, but most for the masses who are confined to the town. The foremost objects are not beauty, pleasure and luxury, but the health and refreshment of the whole people. The sanitary benefit is kindred to that of pure water, it is pure air and communion with nature.

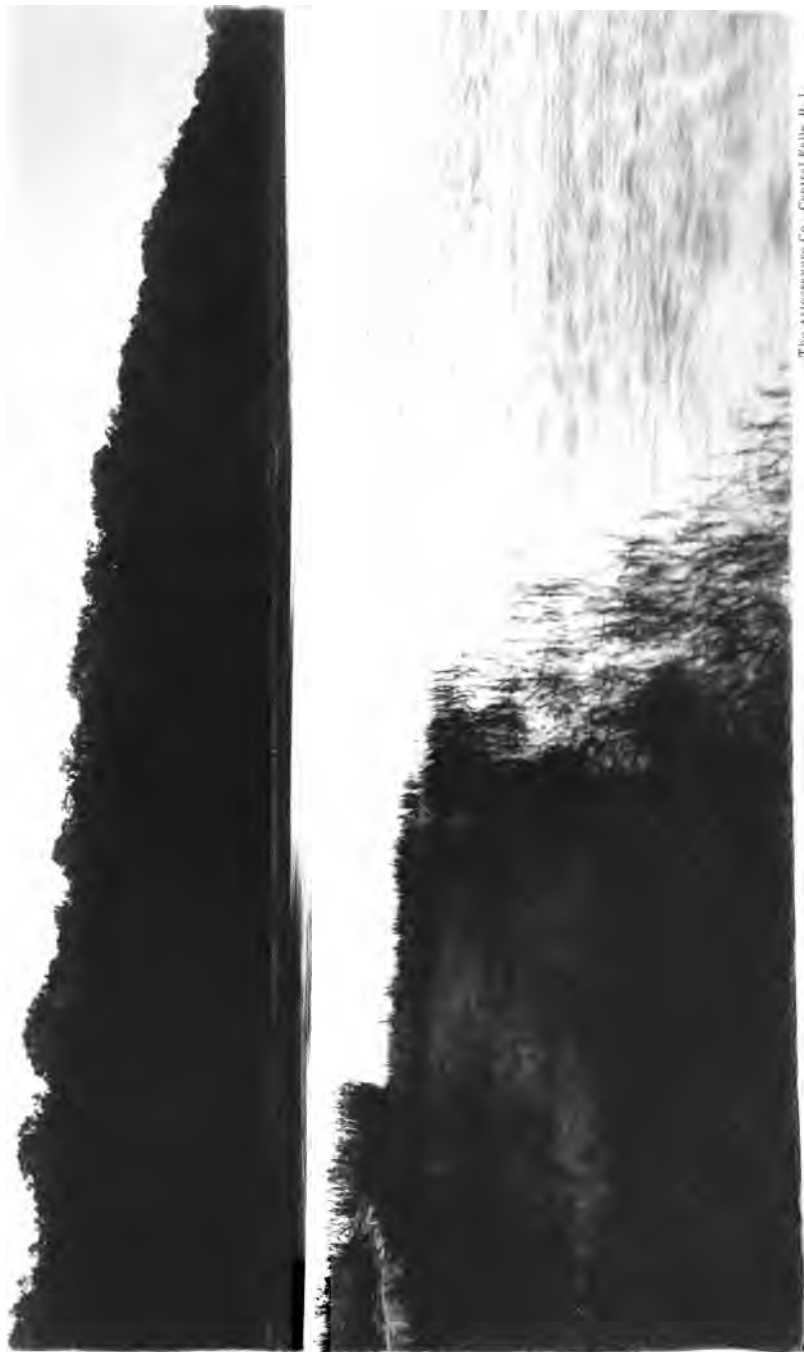
It is said that the little spots of green, the breathing places scattered about the city are the most important because most used by the persons who need them most. Nothing is to be said against the small parcels of green, but *they* cannot have the power and influence of parks.

One needs only to attempt to obtain rest and recreation in such contracted limits of fixed boundaries and regular beds and paths, and then try the whole domain of a park with the variety of nature, hill and dale and running brooks, forests and lakes, to feel the power of the one, and the impotence of the other.

This leads us to the idea of making large parks early in the history of cities, on all sides of them at small cost, accessible to all the people. It cannot be reasonably doubted that this is the correct method.

If anyone can be found now who doubts the imperative necessity of parks, both for sanitary reasons and for agreeable recreation, certainly the combined judgment and deliberate action of the most important cities in the world ought to be to him an overwhelming attestation of the wisdom and expediency of them.

I will therefore present for illustration, the population,



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A VIEW OF THE SWAN POINT ROAD. P. 13.

acres of park, and the number of persons per acre of several cities under the census of 1890 :

	<i>Population.</i>	<i>Acres of Park.</i>	<i>Persons per Acre.</i>
Providence,	132,146	160	826
Boston,	448,477	2,000	224
New York,	1,515,301	4,902	309
Philadelphia,	1,046,964	3,000	349
Brooklyn,	806,343	940	858
Chicago,	1,099,850	3,000	366
St. Louis,	451,770	2,232	202
Washington,	230,392	1,000	230
Baltimore,	434,439	832	522
Cincinnati,	296,908	539	551
San Francisco,	298,997	1,181	253
Buffalo,	255,664	620	412
Detroit,	205,876	740	278
Minneapolis,	164,738	808	204
Savannah,	43,189	60	720
New Haven,	81,298	384	212
Bridgeport,	48,866	240	203
Worcester,	84,655	280	302
Lynn,	55,727	1,600	35
19		24,518	7,056

Average = $7,056 \div 19 = 371$

Providence has 826 persons per acre.

	<i>Population.</i>	<i>Acres of Park.</i>	<i>Persons per Acre.</i>
London,	4,421,661	22,000	200
Paris,	2,260,945	58,000	39
Berlin,	1,547,533	5,000	309
Vienna,	822,176	8,000	103
Brussels,	477,288	1,000	477
Amsterdam,	406,302	800	508
Dublin,	353,082	1,900	186
Montreal,	120,000	550	218
8		25,250	2040

Average of European cities $2040 \div 8 = 255$.

Average of American and European cities $7056 + 2040 \div 27 = 337$.

It is evident from these statistics that there is an average of 255 persons to an acre of park in the eight foreign cities named, and an average of 337 persons to an acre of park in the twenty-seven European and American cities named, while Providence has 826 persons to an acre of park.

These statistics reveal the astonishing fact that no one of the leading cities named in Europe or America, with a single exception, has so little park advantages as Providence.

She has really only about forty-one per cent. of the average park facilities of these twenty-seven cities.

The park record of these cities, the extensive, liberal appropriations of land and resources for the public use in parks, are the strongest assurance of the universal conviction that parks are a necessity.

Still more to impress our minds with the consensus of society, the public opinion on parks, that it may have due and proper weight upon our judgment, we will enter upon a fuller description of a few of these parks.

We will begin with Fairmont Park in Philadelphia. This contains 2,740 acres, and was until recently the largest park in the country, and there were only three larger in the world. It is very beautiful and suggests the possibilities of the shores of the Seekonk, when sagacity, foresight and money shall replenish the earth.

Chicago has thrown a series of parks in a semi-circle around the city, touching the lake at each extremity, connecting them by tree-lined avenues two hundred and fifty feet wide.

This plan of parks connected by boulevards, wide and tree-lined, has found much favor recently in other cities,—for example in New York and Boston, and commends



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ROCHAMBEAU PARK AND FRENCH CELLARS OF 1781. P. 14.

itself most highly for the Providence system as is herein-after set forth. The seven parks so united in Chicago creating almost a single park, includes 2,423 acres.

Forest Park, St. Louis, contains 1,372 acres. The entire parks of the city amount to 2,232 acres.

The Golden Gate Park of San Francisco embraces a territory of 1,043 acres, including a magnificent conservatory modeled after the one at Kew, England.

Druid Hill Park, Baltimore, covers 693 acres; Prospect Park, Brooklyn, 550 acres; New York city has thirty small breathing places, aggregating fifty acres, besides the new Riverside Park along the North River from 72nd to 129th street, including eight-nine acres. She purchased in 1889 on the main land north of the Harlem river, 3,800 acres of land for nine million and fifty seven thousand dollars, and it is to be divided into five parks, united by boulevards three hundred and six hundred feet wide, reducing them in fact to one park.

Boston possesses her Common, comprising an undulating surface of forty-eight acres, with green grass, and shaded by more than one thousand old elms and other trees. Near by are the Public Gardens, including twenty-four acres. The Common is a stately park. The Garden abounds in dainty flower beds, plants, shrubbery, grass plats, stretches of closely clipped lawns and winding gravel paths, with a pond in the centre spanned by a beautiful stone bridge.

The new park system is similar to that of Chicago and New York as we have said. It begins with the Charles River embankment, first an esplanade of two hundred feet wide, two and three-fourth miles along the river extends to a park of one hundred and six acres, and continuing, con-

nects four other parks of 110, 70, 167 and 485 acres respectively. This system of parks and parkways will be eight miles long.

Detroit has seven hundred acres of park on an island in the river. She also is to have a tree-lined crescent avenue, nine miles long, one hundred and fifty feet wide, around the city, after the Chicago, Boston and New York plan.

The city of Washington has twenty-one avenues, from 120 to 160 feet wide, in addition to her streets. These avenues extend sixty-five miles. Many thousands of trees embracing twenty varieties have been planted in ten years. She has also a great number of small parks.

We have called Paris the typical modern city. It has one hundred and twenty miles of tree-lined avenues, twenty thousand acres of parks within an easy reach, and one hundred and seventy thousand acres within forty miles, and all its pleasure grounds are in full accord with its magnificent parks. Let us in the light of the facts consider the condition of Providence.

Comparisons are odious, but they may be instructive and wholesome. Providence has about 160 acres of parks,—possibly 170, with a population of 132,146. She has less than one-half the average park privilege of the leading twenty-seven cities of Europe and America.

She is old and rich, conservative and drowsy. If we neglect, she will some day arise like Paris and cut broad ways through time-honored squares and institutions, because her exceeding need will command and be obeyed. How much better by forethought to take on these changes by natural growth, year by year, as a tree does it.

Contemplate for one moment a Blackstone Park for the East, of two hundred or more acres on the magnificent



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A VIEW IN THE PROPOSED BRADLEY PARK. P. 14.

shores of the Seekonk. It should extend from Butler Hospital south to South Angell street. The banks are from fifty to sixty feet high, with lovely valleys winding down to the water's edge. The views from the heights up and down and across the Seekonk, which broadens out into a bay, are very beautiful and in many places full of grandeur.

This is one of the finest rivers for rowing in the country. The distant shores and hills beyond, the far off pine groves, the various points of land and bays along the shore winding in and out, clothed with lovely shades of green, and the tall trees which crown the bluffs, with the deep cool ravines between, and the little brooks gliding through them, all join to complete in this charming spot the most picturesque scenery.

Add to these characteristics the nearness to the business and life of the city, the inexpensive and ready conveyance to this locality, and the evidence is conclusive that nature herself has predetermined this to be the eastern park of Providence.

The finest drive in the city would accompany the dedication of this park. A boulevard up and down both shores of the river from Providence to Pawtucket. If one would realize the beauty and pleasure of such avenues, let him in a summer afternoon when the sun is in the west, follow the river shore in Swan Point Cemetery, a small portion of this drive. It is exceedingly lovely, and its perfection would carry light to his mind and conviction to his heart, that this superb project has been too long delayed.

We must not overlook the facility with which these

pleasure grounds may be reached by boats of every grade and class, from the city, Pawtucket and the bay.

And finally it is important to note how the people throng to this place every day, thus attesting and proclaiming to all the world the rigorous necessity for the completion of this enterprise.

Let us in considering a park system for the city pause at the north and observe the grand open space at the old French Encampment on the hill.* A far extending landscape is one of the attractions. There is no water view, but these grounds are capable of fine gardens, lawns and groves, with beautiful drives. It is a choice spot for an open air space and breathing place.

It bears the eternal impress of the French, our friends and allies in our first bitter struggle for freedom.

Patriotism commands us to cherish this association. Surely gratitude itself will inspire and stir us to preserve the renown of the men and places consecrated in the conflict for American liberty.

Here on this sacred spot a citizen, while breathing the pure air which sweeps over this hill with the freshness of a mountain breeze, may renew his devotion to his country. Sentiment rules the world and must have its place. This city is not rich or great in historic spots. The Dorr war perhaps left a few. Providence herself, with a modest mein, represents soul liberty.

The northwest side of the city contains the beautiful residence of the late Judge Bradley. Here is a fine rolling country extending over a district comprising hundreds

* This park should bear the name of Rochambeau, and his monument should be a conspicuous adornment of it. Republics are proverbially ungrateful.



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VIEW OF PROVIDENCE FROM NEUTACONKANUT HILL. P. 15.

of acres covered with venerable trees. The work of nearly a century is already done in these forests.

A park of great perfection and beauty, at little cost, waits only for enterprise born of conviction and purpose.

Neuta-con-ka-nut Hill rises in the west two hundred and ninety-six feet above the ocean. The view from its summit of cities, country, wooded valleys, and shining sea are far reaching and grand.

Add to this the great rocks, and lovely ravines running down the slopes of this hill, and the whole combines in furnishing the natural beauties and essentials of a unique and noble park. One standing on this eminence is reminded of the prospects from Heidelberg, Richmond Hill, Windsor, Belvoir or Sterling Castles. It would have had a castle on it years ago had it been in the old countries and in feudal lands.

This hill overlooks views of wilderness on the west unknown to those lofty seats.

We are laying out parks on all sides of Providence. We are going about it in imitation of the park systems of many American cities in a crescent from river to sea. We arrive at Roger Williams Park on the south. A charming, beautiful park, picturesque and lovely. It is surrounded with ponds which are a natural and necessary part of it. It is capable of unbounded development and extension. It is impossible too highly to appreciate this great and growing pleasure ground, now permanently secured to the city of Providence, but the present is the time to insure its future greatness and completeness. Let it extend, while year by year it takes on beauty and perfection.

We are now prepared in completing our park system

after the method of our rival cities in the race for prosperity, to connect all these parks in a crescent from the Seekonk to the sea around the north, west and south, terminating with Fields Point, by broad tree-lined boulevards, making them in this way all one park, these connecting boulevards to follow and include the present streets, and to wind in and out with curves of every variety.

We have expressed great admiration of wide boulevards, but there are several attendant considerations.

The matter of first importance after you have attained to sixty feet of width, is a thorough road bed. The pleasure of drives is gained in the first instance by a smooth, even road, and next by picturesque scenery. A wide, barren boulevard, without trees or gardens and architecture along its course is wearisome and unattractive. It is important to secure trees therefore. If it is wide enough a line of them along the middle is a great perfection, as for example, the water oaks in Tuscaloosa, Ala., and if still wider, then stretches of green, as in Commonwealth Avenue, in Boston.

Great width is not of the first importance. Some of the most attractive streets in this country are not wide ; for example, Temple street, New Haven ; Ocean street in Lynn, or Bellevue Avenue, Newport.

Very extensive width is too expensive when it is obtained at the sacrifice of trees, and if the street must be widened, then the effort should be made to wind around trees, and time-honored obstructions.

Some people, like Vandals, improve everything away, and forget that a narrow street which winds, is more beautiful and interesting, if there is room for all the travel without annoyance.



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A BRIDGE IN ROGER WILLIAMS PARK. P. 15.

All monotonous regularity is to be deplored. Streets of magnificent distances without a bend, are often a delight to the eye, especially in great capitals, on public days, when they are full of the pagentry of the whole earth.

I am proud of Westminster street or Broadway, but for every day life nothing equals winding streets and lanes over hills and dales or through towns.

Straight lines and checkerboard streets, the cutting of all things (including ancient trees) on earth and towards heaven, to grade, the immolation of the remnants of the forest, the growth of centuries, may sometimes possibly be excused on grounds of inflexible utility, but surely on no other.

The checkerboard plan is simple, but when you have seen one such city, it is the type of all the others, and Matthew Arnold had some cause for declaring that "American cities are not interesting."

This crescent of parks and boulevards is to be pierced and intersected by park ways and avenues from the heart of the city.

A crisis has come to us in the matter of parks.* A beneficent Providence has preserved these lands for this very use. Their fair surface is not yet covered with buildings. Prudence and economy would have dedicated them to this service long ago, but as we stand now regarding the future and with responsibility to posterity, we must act. Buildings and progress will immediately increase the expense and burden of this undertaking.

*Schiller says: "Whosoever fails to turn aside the ills of life by prudent forethought, must submit to fulfil the course of destiny."

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide."

We have not the same excuses that our ancestors had. They were surrounded by primeval forests which seemed to have no limit. They were taught that trees were the natural enemies of the human race, and that the great objects and ends of life were to glorify God and subdue trees. They had not the knowledge of sanitation. The necessity of vegetation and of the refreshment of country life to dwellers in cities has only recently reached public attention. They had no cities.

It is a well sustained belief now that human life and power degenerate in cities, and must be restored from the country. Every year the cities pour their population more and more into the country for recreation. But as for the poor, "the mountain must come to Mahomet." They cannot go to the country, the country must come to them. It is certain that small breathing places, good as they may be, are of little value compared with the variety of a large park. The one has still the artificial restraint and contraction of the city, the other the beauty, endless variety and peace of nature herself.

This project of parks for Providence ought to be entered upon at once. It is the duty of the hour. Our sluggishness arises from the fact that this territory on all sides of the city has been open to the public. This unproductive land will immediately be occupied by buildings. They spring up on all sides like magic. There is only one possible way to escape the limitation of our privileges, and that is to secure the public right to the people at once.

Another reason for immediate action is the tardy years required for the perfection of the various parts of a park. Time is the only thing which can produce noble trees,



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CUNLIFF'S POND TO BE ANNEXED TO ROGER WILLIAMS PARK. P. 15

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beautiful shrubs, lawns and walks. Time must furnish and perfect the streets, create the beauty of the long vista and of the changing scene at every turn. It only can give the highest result to art with no conspicuous attention to art.

As maturity is such an essential element in a park, we cannot begin too soon to furnish the benefit and richness of years, or too much deplore a Fabian policy which relegates to other generations a service which can never be performed hereafter with so little labor and cost.

The fathers were mindful of us. They wrote in the great Charter, "to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and to *our posterity*."

Their illustrious example solemnly charges us to regard posterity as well as ourselves. It is noble and unselfish.

John Stuart Mill who doubts concerning the future life, is certain that we ought to put forth all our energies to make this globe a more perfect home for a more perfect humanity.

The person who plants trees, the fruit and shade of which will benefit not himself but others, bears a burden for humanity, and is in touch with the man who suffers that others may live.

We ought to be very thoughtful how much we have received from others. The toiling generations of men who have peopled the earth have transmitted the result of ages of labor to us, embracing the comforts and luxuries of life, political and religious liberty, the highest and best civilization and social life known to the race. And conspicuous in this culture is the city which gathers the best things of this progress within itself, including in its parks the blessings also of the country.

Consider the gratitude from millions of hearts beneath the shade of the grand old trees in the parks of the world, or the shade of the countless thousands of trees on the village greens. The old trees in historic lands are the only living things which have survived from the far off time and seen it all. It becomes us to plant trees as they have been planted for us.

The advice of the Laird of Dumbiedykes to his son was excellent. "Be aye stickin' in a tree, Jock ; it'll aye be growin' while your sleepin'."

This is true not only of the period of natural sleep, but also of the eternal cycle of rest.

I have entered a struggle to save old trees on one of the hills of Providence from the axes of the Vandals. It takes almost a hundred years to produce them, and the tenderness in the past which has spared and preserved them ought to place upon us the most sacred obligation to guard them and send them on their noble mission to minister to the health and refreshment of our children's children.

Let us then at once begin this hundred years of growth on the trees in all our parks. The phantom which confronts us is the cost ; but the experience of other cities leads us to expect to make money by the increased taxes on adjacent lands. Johnston must take care of Neuta-conka-nut park.

Posterity, which has the chief benefit, must divide the burden with us ; besides, we shall attract foreign capital.

Persons seeking stately homes will discover our good taste, beauty and perfection. Mills and business streets, however excellent, are not all of it. The great Judean



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A VIEW OF PROVIDENCE FROM FIELD'S POINT. P. 16.

Master uttered a broad, noble thought when he said, "Man shall not live by bread alone."

Schools, churches, cultivated homes, architecture, parks and tree-lined parkways minister to the noble and diviner nature. The city which gives heed to these things draws to itself riches like a magnet; witness Paris, Washington, and Newport. Besides knowledge and experience of parks kindle the expectation, that bequests and donations will promote this project when there is a trustworthy beginning. This hope is sustained by offers to us already of land without price.

It is evident beyond question that there is not a more permanent or beneficent field for charity or philanthropy.

And when the foundations of this enterprise are laid, as they will be, and when agitation has shown to the whole people our extreme need of parks, then no subject will be dearer to the loyal citizens of Providence, and they will neither disregard nor neglect its pressing demands.

Neither must we lose sight of the fact that parks, by restoring the health of the people add directly to their productive power and to the wealth of the city.

We spend money to endow hospitals. It is a noble work, we ought to do more of it; but it is a nobler work even than this to save health and reduce the need of hospitals.

The improvement and embellishment of Providence, our home and the home of our children, ought to excite our deepest love and highest patriotism.

The proudest memorials of the grandeur and achievement of the great cities of antiquity, found in their ruins to-day, are the adornments with which they graced their public buildings for the common good. The spoils of

nations were gathered to add splendor to their homes. Patriotism was as conspicuous in him who brought gold, ivory, precious woods and stones to decorate the temple as in the general who dragged hostile princes at his chariot wheels.

Even the Psalmist reaches his loftiest strains in describing the outward glory of the city of the living God; there are no sublimer songs of patriotism in any tongue.

Our duty directs us to make Providence as perfect a home as our limitations permit.

Regarding first what is useful, second what is beautiful and ornamental. Edifices on the streets of cities change with fashion, buildings crumble to dust, trees even wax old and decay. "Men may come and men may go" but village greens, parks and highways "go on forever."

The cities of London, Berlin, Paris or Boston without their parks would dwindle at once in importance. Their parks are the *sine qua non*, the conspicuous and imperishable feature of them, the portion which most surely preserves their identity.

If parks are so essential, then Providence, which is so eminently deficient in them, certainly ought seriously to examine and consider her necessities, possibilities and her duty in this regard.

An opportunity not possible to our successors is granted to this generation of placing an impress on the face and fortunes of this city more lasting than monuments, more beneficent than hospitals, since they heal the multitude.

It is quite easy to say that the extent of the enterprise we have outlined is so great that it is impossible of execution. Ah, nothing is impossible to men of conviction and courage. How many noble enterprises have lodged in the



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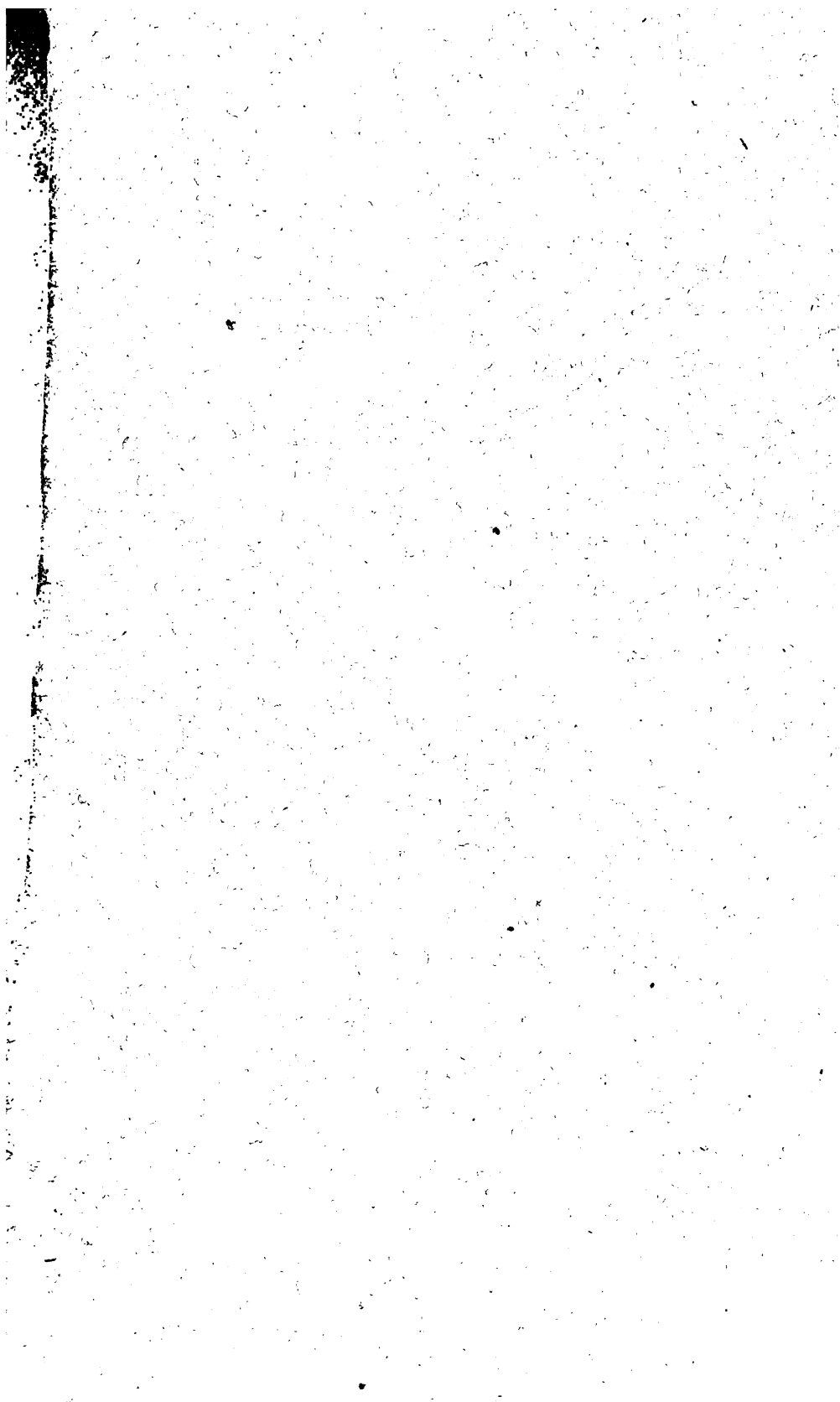
brain, heart and purpose of one man half a century, without popular support, which at this moment surpass in influence and usefulness the wildest dreams of their projectors. Consider the obstacles passed over by the unconquerable spirit of one man in the construction of the Cable Road.

A good cause built upon the adamant foundation of the good of the whole people, with generous and philanthropic motives directing its supporters cannot fail. Agitation will force sweetness, light and wisdom into the minds and hearts of the people, and when a great conviction inspires them with confidence and purpose, they are as irresistible as the forces of the globe.

The progress of humanity attests this on thousands of victorious fields. Hear then the conclusion of the whole matter. The way and method for us is persistence, patience and agitation.

The most sublime truth given to men has witnessed unceasing agitation during twenty centuries. Consider the holy patience and progress, and take courage, for the thing we seek is at hand.

We are impelled by paramount obligations to secure a worthy park system at once. We ought neither to elude the duty nor shun the responsibility. Obstacles will increase in the coming years in a geometric ratio. This auspicious moment is granted to us which will recur to no subsequent generation. We must "Act, act in the living Present."







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